

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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1. There are indications that many members of the CDU do not agree with the course steered by the executive board of the party. Party rallies are usually attended by not more than 15 percent of the membership. The party leadership is reproached with being too subservient to the SPD line in violation of the Christian principles professed by the party. Demands for the election of a new executive board are voiced more and more frequently. The party leadership, which is fully aware of these tendencies, therefore has orders that conferences be attended by party functionaries be held in all Kreis territories that the fight against all opponents of the party line be organized as effectively. Gerald Götting, secretary general of the East German CDU and Heinrich Diepelt, State Secretary at the Ministry of Justice and member of the national executive board of the party, were particularly active in this respect.

- Recent happenings in the CDU show that Goetting, Toeplitz, and Max Seifert, the latter also a member of the CDU national executive board, stick to the new line, while Otto Muechke and other senior members of the party leadership take a different view. However, Muechke has lost much of his influence over younger functionaries.

3. On 22 October, [ ] the CDU headquarters that Semenov advised Gerald Gbetting in a personal interview between 12 and 17 October to moderate his radical course, because otherwise the CDU would decline its membership, which was contrary to Semenov's wishes.

Comment: A growing opposition against the official SED course has been noticed within the East German CDU since May and June 1953. This opposition is connected with the general malaise which found its expression in the demonstrations on and after 17 June. The circles in opposition to Ulbricht believe that they have some support in Senzov who is said to prefer a more liberal course. On the side of the SED leadership efforts are being made to get the situation under control by strengthening the influence of pliant and easily manageable party functionaries such as Gerald Goetting.

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